

Shelter Notes



SPRING/SUMMER 2010 NO. 13

The Golden Days

April marked the happy end of a long saga for seven Golden Retrievers who had been living at the Sonsini Shelter since November 2009. The Pittsfield Animal Control Officer seized thirteen dogs who had been used for breeding, and their owner was charged with 21 counts of animal cruelty.

The Berkshire Humane Society partnered with the Sonsini Shelter to help the Golden Retrievers. They cared for five of the thirteen dogs, and BHS board member Robert Fuster represented all of the dogs in court while Assistant District Attorney Kelly Kemp worked to allow the dogs' ownership to be turned over to the shelters. In March, the courts decided in the dogs' favor, and both shelters were given the go-ahead to adopt them out.

Great homes were found for all of the dogs, but their new owners know they've got some work ahead of them as none of the dogs were housetrained or knew anything about living in a home with a family. But the dogs are eager to learn and, with patience and love, will blossom into wonderful companions.



Photo courtesy Reinout/Berkshots.com



Top left, David poses with Bella the day he took her home. "I love her," David told us. "She will have a great home for the rest of her life."

Above, Harry, the last Golden to go to a new home. Left, potential adopters visit with one of the Retrievers.



The Eleanor Sonsini Animal Shelter, Pittsfield's municipal shelter, is managed by The Friends of Eleanor Sonsini Animal Shelter, Inc., a non-profit, 501(c)(3) public charity.

We are dedicated to re-uniting stray animals from Pittsfield with their owners, providing shelter and veterinary care for animals in need, and finding loving homes for adoptable, homeless animals.



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Shelter Wish List

- Dry or Canned Kitten Food
- Cat Litter
- Staples or Petco Gift Cards
- Laundry Detergent (HE)
- Bleach
- Disposable Gloves (M&L)
- Dishwasher Detergent
- Garbage Bags (30 gal.)
- Paper Towels
- Postage Stamps



From the Chair of the Board



I've often heard the phrase "it takes a village to raise a child." Well, it also takes a village to assure that the homeless animals of our community receive the care they need and are given a brighter future. Fortunately, our shelter does have a village helping to do that.

There are 131 people listed on our most recent volunteer list. They do all of the things necessary to take in stray and homeless animals, care for their needs, and find them new homes. They're a truly dedicated and inspiring group. Then there are the kind people who bring us the supplies we need, and the generous folks who donate money to pay for veterinary care and other expenses. And last but not least there are adopters. Where would the animals be if there weren't people to provide loving homes for them?

When everyone gives just a little support, it adds up to be something extraordinary. Each year, more than six hundred homeless animals at our shelter are given the gift of a good life. It wouldn't be possible without everyone pulling together to make it happen.

Carol

Carol Lew



Monkey Do and his special friend.

Come and see Monkey Do

From the time Monkey Do was a young kitten, he led a long, content, predictable life with his doting elderly owner, Barb. When Barb's health failed, causing her to move to an assisted living facility, Barb's best friend Jean took in the 8-year old cat. Jean's cat thought that this was a terrible idea, so another home was found for Monkey Do. That didn't work out either; his new person decided she didn't want a cat after all.

That's when the bewildered cat ended up at the Sonsini Shelter. It took some time for him to adjust to shelter life, but he has come to enjoy the company of the volunteers and visitors he meets. His favorite thing in the world is being

brushed. His second favorite thing is his doll, which came with him and keeps him company in his kennel. Okay, the doll is a little odd, but don't we all have our quirks?

Anyway, Monkey Do would love to once again be someone's beloved companion. He hopes they'll let him keep his doll, but if he could just get brushed once in a while, he would be a very happy cat. Jean, his lifelong friend, has sponsored his adoption fee and has offered to assist a new owner with vet bills if that would help him find a new home.

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Happy Tails



Hopper, an eleven-year old Rhodesian Ridgeback, was brought to the Shelter by his person who had lovingly cared for him since he was a puppy. She lost her job and home in Florida, and moved to the Berkshires to seek employment. Months later, she had to accept a one-way ticket back to Florida from a family member, but could not bring Hopper with her. Times had been tough for Hopper even before that. He had developed several open sores, an eye infection and he was so overweight that his back legs could barely hold him up.



Hopper relaxes at his new home.

But before a week had passed, Hopper's luck had changed. Volunteer Adelle Michaud saw Hopper and knew he was just the dog for her family. Several years before, Adelle had adopted Kody, an nine-year old Rottweiler, from the Sonsini Shelter. Kody lived happily with Adelle and her husband Fred, but had recently passed away from cancer.

Now it was time to help another senior dog. "This dog needs a place to retire," Adelle said. "I just knew he would get along great with our family. He has the sweetest disposition in the world and we'll take care of his needs for the rest of his days."

Adelle brought him home and he now gets along famously with Fred and their Rat Terrier, Margo. "Our cat, Micky Blue Eyes, is a little suspicious still, but Hopper is very respectful so I think they'll be friends before long."

Hopper has already lost several pounds and has become very playful. "It'll take a while for him to take all the weight off, but when he does, I expect he'll be running around the yard like a puppy," Adelle says.



Faith, an elderly little poodle with an adorable crooked smile, had been at the Shelter since last fall. She was found wandering alone near a school and was never claimed by her owner. Now, Faith has found a wonderful new home with Cynthia and Edward Kinsella, a family that their friends call "ground zero for special needs dogs." Lucky Faith will live out her life loved and cared for by these kind animal-lovers.



Faith with her new person, Cynthia Kinsella.

Three meows for shelter volunteers!



Volunteer Lynn Davis cares for our resident cats 2 or 3 days a week and sometimes helps at cat adoption clinics too. She knows the shelter's cat population so well that she's one of the go-to people when potential adopters have questions about them. "I volunteer because I want to give love and attention to animals who have had a rough start. My favorite part is watching them go to their forever homes."



New Cage/Kennel Sponsor Program

Individuals or businesses can now sponsor a cat cage, dog kennel or dog run with a tax-deductible donation to the Sonsini Animal Shelter.

It's a great way to:

- Help a shelter animal if you cannot currently adopt or volunteer
- Memorialize a loved one
- Advertise your business
- Show your commitment to pet adoption
- Give someone a unique and meaningful gift

A metal plaque with your message will be mounted on the cage or kennel in recognition. Sponsor forms are available at our website, www.pittsfieldanimals.org.



From trash to treasure

Last January, a skittish black cat was noticed wandering around Vicon, Pittsfield's waste facility. Vicon's manager would catch glimpses of her, but couldn't get close. Then, on Valentines Day, he found the cat amidst the garbage along with nine tiny kittens. He scooped up the mamma cat and her eight surviving kittens and called the Sonsini Shelter.



After a rough start to life, this little one now has a loving new home.

"They smelled terrible for the first two weeks," said Jean Dupree, the foster volunteer who was called upon to care for them. "The mom, who we named Kelly Clarksburg, was wary, and the kittens hissed every time I came near."

They were all in poor health too, requiring medication and supplemental feedings. But Jean performed her foster magic, nursing and socializing Kelly and her babies. The friendly, healthy kitties have since been spayed or neutered and adopted into loving homes, but friendly mama Kelly is still awaiting a home of her own.

It's kitten season!

Oh they're cute all right, but remember, every unspayed or unneutered kitten eventually adds thousands more cats into a world where there aren't enough homes for them. There are an estimated 10,000 homeless cats in the Berkshires. How can you help solve this monumental problem?

- PLEASE spay or neuter your cats.
- Help us spread the word that there's a low-cost spay and neuter program, CatS.N.I.P, for people who have trouble affording the cost. Call the Shelter at 413-448-9800 for details.
- Consider adopting an adult cat from a shelter. There seems to always be homes for kittens, but adult cats need homes too. Every time someone adopts an adult cat, there's room at the shelter to take another homeless one in.

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413-448-9800
 www.pittsfieldanimals.org
 ADOPTION HOURS
 Saturday, Sunday,
 Wednesday & Friday
 10am-2pm
 Tuesday & Thursday
 4pm-8pm
 CLOSED MONDAY

63 Downing Parkway
Pittsfield, MA 01201



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